Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 TEGUCI 01383 101718Z

46
ACTION ARA-06

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 ARAE-00 SSO-00 EB-03 SP-02 L-01

INR-05 INRE-00 PRS-01 /033 W
---------- 076043
O 101700Z APR 75
FM AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA
TO SECSTATE NIACT IMMEDIATE 9696

C O N F I D E N T I A L TEGUCIGALPA 1383

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: BBAK, PINT, HO
SUBJECT: UB PAYMENTS - GOH INVESTIGATING COMMISSION

REF: STATE 81544

1. EARLY THIS MORNING, APRIL 10, LOCAL UNITED BRANDS MANAGER HOUSTON LACOMBE CALLED ME TO INFORM ME OF THE RESULTS OF THE MEETING WITH TWO MEMBERS OF GOH BANANA COMMISSION LAST NIGHT. THE MEETING, WHICH LASTE UNTIL 11:00 P.M., WAS WITH FINMIN ACOSTA BONILLA AND HONDURAS ARMED FORCES CHIEF JUAN ALBERTO MELGAR CASTRO. SPEAKING FOR UNITED BRANDS WAS ENRIQUE LOPEZ BALBOA, UNITED BRANDS VICE PRESIDENT FOR LATIN AMERICA.

2. ACCORDING TO LACOMBE, BANANA COMMISSION MEMBERS STRESSED THAT WORK OF NEWLY APPOINTED INVESTIGATING COMMISSION OF GOH NEEDED TO PROCEED SWIFTLY AND CONCLUSIVELY FOR BENEFIT OF ALL CONCERNED. BANANA COMMISSION MEMBERS STRESSED THAT KEY POINT WOULD BE THE NAMING BY UNITED BRANDS OF THOSE HONDURAN OFFICIALS INVOLVED IN THE ALLEGED BRIBE. ACCORDING TO LACOMBE, ENRIQUE LOPEZ BALBOA THEN CALLED UNITED BRANDS HEADQUARTERS AND OBTAINED NAMES. THESE WERE PLACED IN THE HANDS OF THESE TWO COMMISSION MEMBERS LAST NIGHT. LACOMBE LEFT FOR NORTH COAST UB HEADQUARTERS BY COMPANY PLANE IMMEDIATELY AFTER CALL TO ME. HE DID NOT SUPPLY
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 TEGUCI 01383 101718Z

NAMES TO ME.

Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006

Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006

3. I BELIEVE THAT THE MAJOR ADVANTAGE ATTENDANT UPON GELSTHORPE'S PERSONAL APPEARANCE IN HONDURAS WOULD BE TO RELIEVE PRESSURE ON LACOMBE AND OTHER UB EMPLOYEES IN HONDURAS. LACOMBE TOLD ME THAT HE KNEW NOTHING OF ALLEGED BRIBE AND I TEND TO BELIEVE THAT HE IS TELLING THE TRUTH. THE APPEARANCE OF GELSTHORPE AS A TOP MANAGEMENT OFFICER COULD REINFORCE THE STATEMENT ISSUED BY LOPEZ BALBOA THAT NO LOCAL EMPLOYEES INVOLVED IN BRIBERY (SEE TEGUCIGALPA 1372).

4. ON THE OTHER HAND, GELSTHORPE'S PRESENCE HERE AT THIS TIME WHEN PRESS AND OTHER MEDIA HAVE BEGUN STRIDENT VITU-PERATIVE CAMPAIGN AGAINST MULTI-NATIONAL CORPORATIONS COULD EXPOSE HIM TO TREMENDOUS MEDIA PRESSURE AND CONCEIVABLY TO PHYSICAL DANGER. THEREFORE, I BELIEVE THAT A PERSONAL APPEARANCE AT THIS TIME MIGHT BE COUNTERPRODUCTIVE, AND THAT IT WOULD BE BETTER FOR HIM TO OFFER A WRITTEN STATEMENT OR AFFIDAVIT TO THE COMMISSION WHICH WOULD FULLY SET FORTH THE FACTS IN THE SITUATION. MAJOR OBJECTIVE OF HIS TESTIMONY MAY ALREADY HAVE BEEN MET BY DEVELOPMENT REPORTED IN PARAGRAPH ONE ABOVE.
SANCHEZ

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PRESS COMMENTS, DEBT REPAYMENTS, INVESTIGATIONS, COMMITTEE MEETINGS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 10 APR 1975
Decaption Date: 28 MAY 2004
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: GolinoFR
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975TEGUCI01383
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750125-0420
From: TEGUCIGALPA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750461/aaaaceai.tel
Line Count: 84
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION ARA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: LIMDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: LIMDIS
Reference: 75 STATE 81544
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: GolinoFR
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 09 SEP 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <09 SEP 2003 by KelleyW0>; APPROVED <10 SEP 2003 by GolinoFR>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
05 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: UB PAYMENTS - GOH INVESTIGATING COMMISSION
TAGS: BBAK, PINT, HO, UNITED BRANDS, (LACOMBE, HOUSTON), (MELGAR CASTRO, JUAN ALBERTO), (LOPEZ BALBOA, ENRIQUE)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006